4: Fortes and Fortes E-5 (1934-1936) 1936
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243 311 Most compounds also have at their disposal some low-lying alluvial land, (*boog*, valley) suitable for millet or rice. Junior members take up as much as they wish of this, provided it is not required by the head of the compound.

243 596 Reference to the table[1] given previously shows that, on an average, a single unit of food economy is dependent upon the labour of two men and comprises 1·4 households[1] and two primary families. The head of the unit of food economy is entitled to as much assistance as is necessary for the cultivation and harvesting of his compound farms from the junior men, his brothers, sons or nephews belonging to that unit, and to the help of all the women of the unit in sowing and harvesting. He is responsible for the supply of seed, for most of the implements, and he stores the grain in his granaries. In return, all who help him are entitled to share in the produce.

243 596 866 Boys and unmarried young men, dependent upon the wives of the head for cooked food, always assist him in the cultivation of his valley and bush lands. A junior householder need not. If he is ambitious, industrious, or merely planning for the day when he can break away from the control of the head, he cultivates his own bush farm. He supplies his own seed and the produce is his to dispose of as he pleases. Even an adolescent boy may be given a small plot (*sinsiar*) on his father's compound farm to cultivate, the produce of which is absolutely his own. This is one of the ways in which a boy acquires a few chickens and lays the foundations for the economic independence which he gradually reaches in the course of years. Every independent cultivator thus augments the food supply of his own household or family, but not of the whole unit.

244 596 422 This differentiation is even more marked with subsidiary crops, of which the most important is ground-nuts (*sukpaam: arachis hypogea*). The head of a self-supporting unit interplants ground-nuts with his early millet on the compound farm. The crop yielded is his property, though any member of the unit can help himself to some for food. But, in addition, almost every man and boy able to wield a hoe and most adult women have their own ground-nut fields (*sukpalag*). These are made on patches of compound land unsuitable for other crops and

[1] Actually 50 per cent. (28 out of 58) units of food economy have two or more households.

[1] [See cat. 116, p.241 — Analyst.]

4: Fortes and Fortes E-5 (1934-1936) 1936
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not required at the time, and always borrowed specifically for this purpose from kinsmen and friends. Women rarely obtain their ground-nut fields from their husbands. They prefer to beg land from their own cognatic kinsmen, thus emphasizing their absolute independence of their husbands as regards this crop.

For this reason they never receive assistance from their husbands with the hoeing and planting of their ground-nut fields. A son often assists his mother; or young women 'invite' (*pooh*) a couple of young kinsmen of their husband to hoe their ground-nut fields in return for a very good meal, the grain for which the woman generally provides from her own resources. Many, again, have simply to rely upon their own skill with the hoe. The ground-nut crop thus gained is the woman's to consume or sell, as she pleases.

Of the remaining subsidiary crops, the most important—though less important than ground-nuts—are the legumes, Bambara beans (*suma: voandzeia subterranea*), cow-peas (*tia: vigna sinensis*) and geocarpa beans (*sulempie: kerstingiella geocarpa*); and the root crops, frafra potatoes (*peeha: coleus dysentericus*) and sweet potatoes (*yumhma'ala: ipomea batatas*). Bambara beans and frafra potatoes are grown by the more energetic younger men on borrowed strips of compound farm after the millet is cut. Cow-peas are planted along the edges of compound farm by the head when he sows his early millet.

Vegetables are the concern and the property of women. The head of a unit of food economy every year allots a small patch of land, some 100 square yards or less, immediately beside the compound wall to each woman with a kitchen of her own. Here she sows her *nangena* (*gynandropsis pentaphylla*), some ocro (*ma'ana: hibiscus esculentus*), *bet* (*h. sabdariffa*), *beris* (*h. cannabinus*). The latter three vegetable plants are also grown like cow-peas and *neri* (*cucumis melo*), alongside the paths which border the compound farm. Thus as they grow and ripen the women can get at them easily without injuring the millet. A woman's vegetable patch is always hoed for her by her husband as the produce is for their common use. The leaves of the cow-pea plant (*tia: vide supra*) are used as a vegetable known as *benit*, and are plucked for this purpose by the wives of the man who planted the *tia*; and the same rule applies to the use of the *neri* seed as a soup ingredient.

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

Plate II

778
857
291
516

A small boy 'sacrificing' to his own 'shrine' (posed)

857
412
291
244

Gleaning groundnuts, one of the ways of learning to use a hoe. The child on the extreme right is a girl

[facing p. 17]

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

and occasionally one or two of cowpeas, are deftly ejected into each hole with the thumb and first fingers; both early millet and cowpeas are sown in the same hole. The seed is then lightly covered with soil and made firm by treading as planting proceeds. It generally takes two or three days to finish sowing early millet, and if the ground is still soft enough, guinea corn, mixed with "neri", is sown immediately, in exactly the same way as early millet and cowpeas, in the spaces between. When the sowing of guinea corn is finished in the compound farm, late millet is sown; it is also used for filling blanks in guinea corn. Attention is next given to the farms away from the compound. All cereals, except rice, are planted by the beginning of May, in a normal season.

Planting Minor Crops.

At the end of April or early in May women plant "bersi" (Nankani) (Hibiscus cannabinus), okra, and "nangina" (Gynandropsis pentaphylla), in beds close to the compound, and "bito" (Hibiscus sabdariffa) at intervals of 2' beside paths and along farm boundaries. Towards the end of May, groundnuts are planted 6" to 18" apart in a manner similar to cereals, except that frequently the land is hoed first. Bambarra beans are planted next, either on the flat, or if the land is wet, on wide ridges. Coleus potatoes and sweet potatoes are planted on ridges in June. Rice is sown at the end of June, alone, or occasionally between guinea corn on wet land; when the water-table rises in late July, rice is thinned and transplanted as opportunity permits. This is also the time for thinning and transplanting late millet; a common practice is to transplant it into groundnut farms. Tobacco seed beds are prepared and sown in August, and the seedlings are transplanted in September and October for the dry season crop.

Crop Varieties.

A number of crop varieties are recognised and although many of the names distinguish only colour factors, other factors, such as earliness of maturity, particular uses, predilection for certain kinds of soil and manure, are known and utilised. With guinea corn, for instance, over a dozen varieties exist.

Cultivation.

Intercultivation starts as soon as crops have germinated, and any manure which was not carried before planting, is applied at this time. Cultivation consists of scraping the top three or four

7:Lynn G-5 (1932-1936) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

have refrained from experimenting with anything outside the capacity of the better farmers in the district to adopt; it would be of little value to us to know, for instance, that ten tons of manure per acre are desirable, when the maximum amount available is say three or four tons. And if these small dressings were not satisfactory we should have to consider other measures for maintaining fertility. 654

IV. *Root Crops.*

The desirability of increasing the proportion of land planted with root crops has already been stated. Experiments have been conducted with the following crops: yams (Dioscorea spp.), sweet potatoes (Ipomoea batatas), cassava (Manihot utilissima), and Coleus potatoes (Coleus dysentericus). The conclusions reached with regard to each are discussed below.

Yams.

Yams are the staple crop of the Mamprusis and Dagombas further South, and except for one or two special areas near the Volta Rivers—South Kusasi and South East Zuarungu—where conditions resemble those in Mamprusi, they are practically not grown at all in North Mamprusi. Yams are imported, however, and sell for very good prices in local markets. Ill considered attempts to introduce yams in the past had not met with much success (a notable exception being Chana, in Navrongo Area), and it was considered desirable to explore the situation by experiment. [244]

Our experiments have taken the form of variety trials and two Dagomba varieties, Kuki and Puno, have proved outstandingly the best yielders in every trial, see Appendix IV, Tables 14 and 16. But even the best yield from these does not compare with an indifferent yield in Dagomba. Nevertheless, a low yield of saleable tubers might prove profitable for sale locally as a luxury crop. In a season when rains come early and keep on late, yams yield fairly well; but since the early and the late rains are notoriously variable in North Mamprusi, yams must always be regarded as a gamble and only small scale planting is recommended. A point in favour of yams, which was brought out in the Unit Holding Rotation Experiment at Navrongo in 1936, is the remarkably high residual value of the heavy yam cultivation by comparison with the cultivation for sweet potatoes; this was shown by the yields of a subsequent mixed cereal crop. (The difference was nearly 100%.) A small area of yams would appear to be worth including in unit holding trials.